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FLOOR DEBATE

February 19, 2002 LB 909  
LR 6

sovereign entity, but it is strictly under the federal government's jurisdiction. LR 6CA addresses issues of economic development. Nebraska enjoys an extremely low unemployment rate, although it is edging a little bit upward at this time. The unemployment rate on some reservations is as high as 70 percent. If this were a statewide unemployment rate, we would be in a depression not unlike the Great Depression of the thirties, even worse. There would be bread lines and hunger and desperation. There would be a need to do anything and everything to increase the economic opportunities for Nebraskans. This resolution is about economic development. It is sad but true, but there has been no economic development on the reservations over the last 100 years, no resources with which to do it, no prime location to make it feasible. It just hasn't happened. A major contributing factor to this is that many were put on reservations that were remote, that were on lands that were of little value and that were in inconvenient locations. They are on land that basically nobody else wanted. Tribal governments are not looking for handouts from the federal or state governments. They are seeking economic self-sufficiency through a proven method--casino gambling. Now, LR 6CA has a number of hurdles to clear. First, this resolution, of course, has to go through the legislative process just to make it on the ballot in November. Usually the committee process and three rounds of debate are grueling enough for any legislation. The second hurdle this resolution will face will be a vote of the people. Even if this resolution were to receive 49 favorable votes on Final Reading, the ultimate decision rests with the citizens of Nebraska who will make that decision in the voting booths in November. Nebraskans will have the final say. The third hurdle will be the trailer bill, which will have to be developed. LR 6CA, if passed, would remove the...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...constitutional prohibition of gaming on reservation lands. The trailer bill would have to list the types of gaming that would be permissible on those lands and outline the process that would be used to complete a compact. The trailer bill, LB 909, has been introduced. The last